

HAMNET BULLETIN FOR SUNDAY 6 June 2004

HAMNET is the Official Emergency Communications network of the South African Radio League and provides emergency communication to local, regional and national authorities, when requested to do so.

THIS BULLETIN WAS COMPILED AND PREPARED BY FRANCOIS BOTHA ZS6BUU.

IN THE BULLETIN TODAY:-

BULLETINS AROUND THE COUNTRY EMERGENCIES AROUND THE WORLD SHIPPING FREQUENCIES THE VALUE OF PACKET RADIO IN EMERGENCIES TRAINING SESSIONS COMRADES MARATHON

2. HAMNET BULLETINS AROUND THE COUNTRY

KZN Sunday morning at 07H00 on their local VHF repeaters with a relay on 7.070MHz

National Bulletin at 17H00 local on 145,700MHz, 10,130Mhz in the 30M band with a relay on 7.070Mhz in the 40M band. Current winter time is 16H30.

The Gauteng North bulletin will follow immediately after the National Bulletin on 145,725MHz in the Pretoria area on Sundays.

North West Province have a club bulletin on Mondays, which includes a Hamnet segment at 19H00 local on 3,750Mhz in the 80M band as well as their local repeater on 145.737.5Mhz.

Hamnet Western Cape Province meet on Wednesdays at 20H30 local on 145:700MHz, relayed on 3,674MHz.

The HAMNET Bulletin is sent to all those of whom I have an e-mail address and also sent out on packet by Rudi, ZS6DX.

2. EMERGENCIES AROUND THE WORLD

At present, the emergency situation around the world has not changed much. Suffice to say, there will never be a world without some emergency somewhere.

Complex emergencies at present number 26 countries. Again, so many are in Africa Angola, Congo, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Great Lakes, Horn of Africa, Somalia, Southern Africa, Sudan, Uganda and West Africa.

They talk about NEPAD. They talk about Renaissance, however, the emergencies just keep on cropping up in Africa and increasing.

In the rest of the globe, the only real emergencies of note include, floods in China. Severe floods in Haiti, with graphic pictures being shown in quite a few local newspapers this week.

Food shortages in at least 35 countries around the world as of yesterday. Consider yourself as blessed with a plate of food on your table this evening with at

least half a million people being selectively starved to death by the Sudanese Government because their religious belief is not correct. Is this the world we really have to adapt to live in these days?

3. EMERGENCY SHIPPING FREQUENCIES

We in no way wish to interfere in any way with the wonderful work being done by Alistair ZS5MU and his Maritime Mobile network, but there are some frequencies that may be of interest to many HAMNET members. And here I wish to thank Andrew Perrins, ZR1SBM for his input as he himself is involved with the Maritime fraternity in the Western Cape.

The emergency frequency of 2182KHz is still monitored here in South Africa, and along the African coast in the AM (double sideband) mode. The 3 main coastal stations are in Durban, Port Elizabeth and Cape Town. Radio Walvis Bay also monitors this frequency.

However, most traffic between coast stations and shipping at sea are conducted on the 4, 8, 12, 16 and 22MHz Maritime bands, with Cape Town ZSC, being the main operating station. The other stations along the coast work on a skeleton staff, shift basis.

Then, also, they operate in Channels, which makes it a little difficult to listen to. Some of these channels are split with result you may have to make use of a split frequency set-up to follow any conversations.

Channel 421 = Tx; 4417 and Rx: 4125 USB. Channel 821 = Tx; 8779 and Rx; 8255 USB. Channel 1221 = Tx; 13137 Rx; 12290 USB. Channel =1621 Tx; 17302 and Rx; 16420 USB. Channel 2221 = Tx; 22756 and Rx; 22060 USB.

Silvermine listen on 8975 USB and a host of other frequencies depending on the time and day and propagation conditions.

We don't always have the time to sit and monitor these frequencies but the 2182 AM and the 8976 USB may be of interest to Amateurs.

4. THE VALUE OF PACKET RADIO IN EMERGENCIES

Last month I discussed the value that can still be obtained from Morse Code. Let us not forget the value of Packet Radio in an emergency situation.

Again, looking at an article that appeared in the January 1988 issue of Radio ZS titled "African Near-Disaster Underscores Packet Project Urgency" What is more, this emergency happened on our doorstep in Lesotho. You may recall that during 1987, Lesotho was struck by the worst snow and rainstorms in living memory. Villages, farms and small towns were cut off from the outside world and supplies were desperately needed.

The SAAF were called on to send helicopters into the Kingdom to assess the situation. The population was found to be in a truly desperate situation.

This is where, over and above normal radio communication, a Packet network was set up to coordinate the supplies desperately needed in various parts of the country. A number of pilot stations were set up in the network, which was linked, to the SA6SAT PBBS in Johannesburg. From there the gateway to the United Nations and other emergency organizations not only around South Africa but around the world was established. A digipeater was later established which effectively maintained much needed communication between Lesotho and Johannesburg.

SA AMSAT financed the South African side of the project

I recall much later in the United States, when the Baltimore express was involved in a major rail accident. What transpired was the rapid establishment of a Packet Radio network from the accident site to nearby emergency relief establishments to coordinate the rescue effort and also the establish a list of names which could be verified with the official passenger list.

Packet Radio has come a long way since early days. Many newer variations of Packet are available these days and should not be overlooked in major disaster situations.

5. HAMNET TRAINING SESSIONS

It has been suggested that we hold, at various centres, a Training Update for the benefit of those who have recently joined HAMNET as well as a refresher for the more establish members.

This is something that I will need to compile. However, I feel that the HAMNET Manual, which is being brought up to date, could play an important part of this training session.

I will look at the Manual and probably break it into various segments for discussion and forward this to the various Provincial Directors for their perusal and possible follow up.

6. THE COMRADES MARATHON

Communications will again be stretched on Wednesday the 16th when the Comrades Marathon from Durban to Pietermaritzburg takes place. From information supplied by the KZN HAMNET team, 39 operators will be deployed to maintain effective communication.

Dave, ZR5CW, will be keeping a watchful eye on communications that day as there will also be 14 CB operators assisting at various points.

We wish the KZN team a lot of luck during the running and hope all goes well.

FINAL NOTE

Chris ZS6VB has offered to look into the re-introduction of the HAMNET Indaba on the air. Chris and myself will be discussing this issue and we can look

forward in the near future of this weekly slot of items related to emergency communications being heard. We need to negotiate repeater usage, format, time and content. Any item you wish to add to the Indaba can be sent to me or directly to Chris as zs6vb@absamail.co.za

Please let me know when you change your e-mail address. I am getting returned mail when sending out the monthly Bulletin. It could also be that your mailbox was full. However, the onus still rests with you if your address changes, it is up to you to let me know. Communication is the name of this specific game.

Provincial Directors, please let me have input on the allocation of the grant, as this is needed to compile a draft for the Dept. of Transport.

Bulletin ends.